



Antique Boutique



155 1 10

Chapter 1 by SaintSayaka

Her eyes burned red through the veil of the darkened crawl space, searching carefully. Boxes of old movie posters and a few dead spiders sat between her and the chest. Tucking a lock of her brilliant white hair behind her ear, she brushed past the obstacles and claimed her prize, eagerly fumbling with the chest's lock. It rusted and coughed in her hands, unwilling to give up its contents.

"Oh, come on," she grumbled, "I don't have time for this." Fortunately, she had brought her lock picks with her, and the chest didn't have a chance once they had been pulled out of her pockets. Buckling under the silver stick, it heaved open, releasing a musty stench throughout the small space. To most, the smell would have been unbearable, but to her it was familiar and welcomed.

Sure, it was a shame that her aunt finally lost her battle to leukemia, and the young woman felt sorry for her. Then again, nobody in the family had even known that she existed. Somewhere between her third divorce and fifth cat, Aunt Cathy had ceased contact with the outside world. There had been a few failed expeditions to her home in an effort to get some sort of explanation out of her, with little to no avail. This was about twenty years ago.

As it turned out, she was bit of a hoarder. Not one of the basic ones that you see on TV where their floors are overrun with rats. Not one that would throw out a plastic bag, but of strange eclectic items that you would find at the very least, nifty garage sales. They simply didn't know what to do with them. In all of the pictures she had seen of her aunt, the woman had not noticed one where she had worn anything of the sort).

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a tin exclusively for doll heads (from ancient porcelain to Malibu Barbie), and doilies of female genitalia (perhaps of Cathy's own contribution?). Nobody else had known about this quality of life until her death, and once they did, well, none of them were exactly jumping up and down to take charge of the estate sale.

None, that is, except the woman.

What a stroke of luck! The moment she acts upon her lifelong dream of opening an antique shop, and her mysterious aunt keels over. With, ah, deference to the dead, of course. There might not even be an estate sale at this rate. She might just sell everything in the house.

With the chest open, she sighs, relieved. The treasure inside was more than worth her trek out here.

Chapter 2 by Phantim



She excitedly lifted the box up to take down stairs and examine the contents in better light. She was trying to maneuver her way through the bedraggled attic when she tripped over one of her aunts perverse pleasure sticks. She hit the ground with an agonizing thud and the box slipped from her fingers rolling down the stairs. She heard it repeatedly thud down the stairs and smash. Oh no! She slowly got up and dusted off her quickly bruising knees. Time to go see what the damage was.

She walked down the stairs picking up little bits and bobs that had fallen out of the box on its tumultuous journey down the stairs. When she got to the bottom however, her prize lay in ruins. It had been an antique early Prussian ceramic plate... she had seen one sold before for over one hundred thousand dollars. Tears welled in her eyes and she cursed her clumsiness. She went and got a broom and dustpan and began to sweep up the shards. Finally when she was done she lifted the heavy box and was about to throw it out as well. Then she noticed there was a loose spot on the bottom... It wasn't just damage from the fall, it was a secret compartment!

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